

392

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY	Bulgaria	REPORT	
SUBJECT	Resistance Potential	DATE DISTR.	14 December 1955
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ARMY review completed.

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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STATE	X	ARMY	#X	NAVY	#X	AIR	#X	FBI	#	AEC				
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INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

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REPORT

25X1

COUNTRY Bulgaria

DATE DISTR. 25 Nov. 1955

SUBJECT Bulgarian Resistance Potential

NO. OF PAGES 5

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Resistance Groups

1. [redacted] a partisan group, consisting of about 70 persons, [redacted] had been arrested by the Peoples' Police (Narodna Militsiya - NM) in Silistra (N 44-08, E 27-17) in 1954. This group was sent to a prison in Ruse.

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Passive Resistance

2. [redacted] all Bulgarians at some time complained to their neighbors or friends about the various bad economic factors, such as working conditions, poor wages, lack of housing, and scarce commodities, which could be attributed to the present regime. In almost every family or social gathering, complaints against the regime inevitably arose before the evening was over.
3. Strikes and absenteeism were practically non-existent. The population was well aware that if they participated in any such moves, they would probably be unemployed for a long time and decent employment was difficult to find. [redacted] rumors about a strike which occurred in Plovdiv, during 1953, where tobacco field workers participated. The outcome and/or reasons for this alleged strike were not known [redacted] although the constitution formally permitted workers to strike, the workers greatly feared the consequences of such an act.

25X1

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

SECRET

-2-

25X1

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In a restaurant where a Communist was delivering a speech which glorified the Party, the guests usually feigned sleep, spoke to other patrons sitting behind them, or paid no attention to the Communist speaker.

Sabotage

5. The following possible acts of sabotage are the only ones known

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- a. During Fall 1952.

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persons speak of the newly-renovated passenger vessel, the DIMITUR BLAGOEN (formerly the CZAR SIMION), which had been blown up and gutted by fire on the evening of 8 September 1952. The ship was 80 m long and allegedly had a capacity of 1,200 passengers. The local populace had expected Bulgaria's Premier, Chervenkov, to be in Ruse to christen the vessel on the following day, a national Bulgarian holiday ("Liberation of Bulgaria by Communists"). Local Ruse newspapers claimed only that an explosion had occurred in the vessel's engine rooms and that the vessel was practically destroyed by fire. approximately 120 shipyard workers had been arrested but they had been released later due to lack of evidence. It was rumored among the populace that an unidentified Yugoslavian immigrant had sabotaged the vessel and then escaped.

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b.

an attempt was made by unidentified persons to blow up the plant on the evening of 8 September 1952. This plant produced various types of agricultural machine equipment, such as combines, harrowers, and other farming implements normally towed by tractors or vehicles. According to his brother, factory personnel or guards had discovered a series of charges, consisting of lead wires to which detonating charges had been attached, on the evening of 8 September 1952. These lead wires supposedly extended to the four corners of the plant and also to a room where parts were stored. Rumors among the employees claimed that the only device needed to set off the charges was a blasting machine which was not found in the plant. The plant was supposed to be blown up on the 9 September 1952 national holiday.

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- c. During 1953,

a government flour mill in Yambol (N 42-28, E 26-31), presumed to be the largest in Bulgaria, had been destroyed by fire during late 1952 or early 1953 the fire occurred on a day when the flour mill workers were off.

fires broke out simultaneously in four corners of the flour mill. Several pilots from an unidentified airfield near Yambol happened to be passing by the flour mill and noticed the flames. The pilots attempted to enter the flour mill and extinguish the fires but the watchman on duty refused to let them enter. These pilots presumably forced their way into the flour mill and claimed to have seen several unexploded hand grenades on the floor.

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SECRET

SECRET

-3-

25X1

flour mill workers had started the fires, and [] the watchman had been arrested and imprisoned for not permitting the pilots to enter the flour mill.

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- d. [] the Georgi Milev Industrial Oil Plant in Sofia had been allegedly blown up by saboteurs in 1949. [] the plant's manager, a Yugoslavian political immigrant, supposedly bribed an unidentified Bulgarian worker to place two time bombs in the plant's furnaces. These time bombs had been set to explode at 1400 hours, at which time a change of work shift would occur; they exploded at the designated time and killed approximately five workers. [] this was an act of sabotage.

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[] the plant personnel manager was apprehended about one year later but the bribed Bulgarian worker escaped.

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- e. [] fire fighting vehicles from Sofia and Samakov (N 42-19, E 23-33) were combatting the fires of the above oil plant, another fire was allegedly started in an unidentified Soviet saw mill in Samakov. This saw mill was completely destroyed by fire because all fire-fighting apparatus was at the oil plant. [] the fire at Samakov had been deliberately started, by unknown persons, because it was too coincidental that the fire fighting vehicles from Samakov were in Sofia at the time.

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Popular Attitudes Towards the Regime

6. Bulgarians most disliked and frequently complained about the low-wage level as compared to the high prices for food and clothing. Another complaint was the lack of work and the lack of free time. Only good Party members had no difficulty finding decent employment; the ingratiating, self-professed type of Party member had the best jobs.
7. [] the population had little leisure time after working hours since the Party always scheduled Party-sponsored assemblies which consumed their spare time. For example, persons had to attend evening meetings of Dimitrov's Union of the People's Youth (Dimitrovski Sayuz na Narodnata Mladezh - DSNM), the Voluntary Organization for Defense Assistance (Dobrovolna Organizatsiya za Sudeistvie na Otbrana - DOSO), the Red Cross, as well as meetings called to celebrate Communist holidays. Consequently, the population rarely attended movies or other types of amusement during their free time.
8. [] Bulgarians' dislike for the present regime was steadily increasing, particularly that of those living in villages. [] as an example of what could happen there: a private farmer had been levied a harvesting quota of 2,000 kg. for a certain crop of which 1,000 kg. was intended for the government and 1,000 kg. for himself. However, due to poor weather, his fields yielded only 1,000 kg. As his quota had been fixed at 2,000 kg., an excuse was not accepted for the fact that he had only reaped 1,000 kg. and he was still forced to give 1,000 kg. to the government. This left the farmer with none and he found it difficult to feed his family. [] such instances occurred frequently and, as a result, more and more farmers were giving up their farms and moving to the cities to find jobs as laborers. Another example [] concerned the quota of wool that a private farmer was required to furnish the government. His wool quota was based on the amount of land he had and not on the number of sheep he owned. However, when a farmer lacked the money to buy the necessary sheep to fulfill his wool quota, the farmer suffered, not the government.

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SECRET

-4-

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9. [] the Party appeared to be making limited membership gains among the population because slightly more were joining than those who were dropping out. These gains were attributed to the fact that certain people joined in order to get better jobs or to retain their present jobs. []

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Attitude of Youth Toward Regime

10. The regime had a decided effect on Bulgarian youth in that the youth seemed to believe the propaganda and promises more readily than the older people who knew what Bulgaria was like before the Communists came to power. The youth seemed to be easily influenced, particularly those in the 13 to 18-year age group who were too young to understand the Party's aims.

11. Young persons were aware of the DSNM's existence, advantages, etc., from propaganda in the newspapers and on the radio. []

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[] those who joined did so only because membership in the organization carried great weight with prospective employers. The primary aim of DSNM was to convince youth of the value of Communism but []

[] less than one per cent of the older union members actually believed the propaganda. Once a member had completed high school, he usually failed to attend meetings and, because of this, he lost his membership. All high school students were compelled to be members of the DSNM.

12. [] estimated [] membership of the DSNM in Ruse was about 60 per cent in the 13 to 26-age group and [] membership was more important in the cities than in the villages because of the employment and educational advantages in the cities. DSNM members rarely praised their organization openly to non-members and did not try to induce non-members to join. In fact, members tried to avoid the meetings because they were time-consuming.

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13. Membership in the Communist Party in Ruse was much smaller than that of the DSNM, possibly only embracing less than five per cent of the population. [] in one factory with 2,000 employees, there were only about 30 members.

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Morale of Security Forces and Their Attitude Towards the People

14. [] Bulgarian security forces [] mission appeared to be guarding public installations, protecting Party functionaries, etc. [] the morale of Security Forces personnel was much better than that of the regular army personnel. The duties of members of the Security Forces were much easier and they seemed to be selected for political reliability. [] the political attitude of Security Forces personnel was somewhat similar to that of regular army personnel but [] if an opportunity arose, Security Forces personnel would probably rebel against the present regime - [] They state that they are loyal but, given the chance, they would turn against their superiors and the present regime. []

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Anti-Semitism

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15. [] no instances of anti-Semitism in Bulgaria but [] there were very few Jews in Bulgaria after 1944; most fled when the Communists came because they knew that they would be the first to lose their properties and businesses. Those who remained appeared to be engaged in commerce.

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SECRET

-5-

25X1

Military Desertions

16. Desertion from the Bulgarian Army was rarely attempted because the troops feared the consequence, which was usually a prison term of possibly 15 years. However [redacted] the following individual instances of desertions from Trudovak units between 1951 and 1953 by Trudovaks who belonged to the intelligentsia and could not tolerate the heavy manual labor required of them. 25X1
- a. In March 1952 while in Zvezdets (N 42-07, E 27-24), [redacted] a Trudovak was found sleeping with a carbine and five rounds of ammunition on his person. Military authorities claimed that this man was preparing to desert because he had stolen the carbine and because the border was only 1½ km. away [redacted] 25X1
- b. In 1952, [redacted] Trudovaks had succeeded in escaping from the village of Stefan Karadzovo (N 42-13, E 26-49) during winter 1951. 25X1
- c. In 1952, [redacted] an EM had escaped across the border into Turkey from an unidentified unit which was subordinate to the division in Yambol; this division had been constructing unknown types of fortifications along the Bulgarian-Turkish border. 25X1

Resistance Potential

17. [redacted] about 70 to 75 per cent of the Bulgarian population would openly resist the regime if they were given outside aid, such as weapons and military equipment, and if there was an allied invasion. [redacted] 25X1
- [redacted] However, [redacted] everyone is now frightened of everyone else. [redacted] women would resist more than the men because women were not required to work before 9 September 1944 and that now, everyone works. [redacted] the population would participate in more sabotage and other anti-Communist activity if they had more freedom of movement and speech. 25X1
18. [redacted] never heard of any cases of resistance by religious groups in Bulgaria which were predominantly members of the Orthodox Church. The only persons attending church services in Ruse [redacted] were women and persons who were over 50 years of age. The younger generation, specifically males, did not attend church services due to fear of retaliation and possible harassment by government and Party officials. 25X1
19. [redacted] villagers and farmers would be the first to give support to the Allies because they seemed to be the most oppressed group. The second most eager group would be the white-collar workers because they were the most underpaid of all worker groups and, as a result, were disgruntled. [redacted] laborers in third place. 25X1
20. [redacted] if the population heard rumors or facts about an Allied approach, their greatest fear would still be the Security Police. He believes that if an Allied landing occurred from the Black Sea, the population of Sofia would immediately begin liquidating low-level MIA agents and Party officials and would sabotage army military units; [redacted] this would occur as soon as the army moved to another front to repel an Allied landing. Also, that if the population knew that material aid such as arms and ammunition, would be furnished them, such aid would serve to organize the population against the present regime. 25X1

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